

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. **(Original)** A layered filter structure, said filter element comprising
  - a first layer, said first layer comprising a porous metal layer;
  - a second layer, said second layer comprising a self-supporting layer of sintered short metal fibers;  
said first layer and said second layer being sintered together.
2. **(Original)** A layered filter structure according to claim 1, whereby said second layer has a maximum roughness depth defined by the  $R_t$  value of less than three times the equivalent diameter of a short metal fiber of said second layer, said  $R_t$  value being measured over a length equal to the thickness of said second layer.
3. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to claim 1 [[or 2]], whereby said short metal fibers of said second layer are three-dimensionally orientated.
4. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said first layer is sintered.
5. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said first layer comprises a non-woven metal fiber fleece comprising long metal fibers.
6. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said first layer comprises metal powder particles.
7. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said first layer comprises short metal fibers.

8. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said first layer is supported by a reinforcing structure.
9. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said second layer further comprises long metal fibers and/or metal powder particles.
10. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said second layer comprises between 20 and 80 % short metal fibers and/or metal powder particles and between 20 and 80 % long metal fibers.
11. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said first layer has a porosity ranging between 50 and 85 %.
12. **(Currently Amended)** A layered filter structure according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, whereby said second layer has a porosity ranging between 50 and 85 %.
13. **(Original)** A method of manufacturing a layered filter structure, said method comprising the steps of :
  - providing a first layer, said first layer comprising a porous metal layer;
  - providing a second layer, said second layer comprising a self-supporting layer of short metal fibers which are sintered together;
  - bringing said first layer and said second layer in contact with each other to form a layered structure;
  - sintering said layered structure.
14. **(Currently Amended)** The use of a layered filter structure according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1 as surface filtration medium.
15. **(Original)** The use according to claim 14 for the filtration of liquids or gases.